

# KEYnotes

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND RECREATION MANAGERS

April, 1988 Vol. 18 No. 4

## COMPANY PICNIC SURVEY RESULTS

The results are in from NESRA's company picnic survey conducted last month. Perhaps the information below will assist you as you plan your company picnic.

- 84% of the 394 respondents have an annual company picnic.
- Of those who have picnics, 97% are company-wide while only 3% are departmental.
- An average of 54% of employees in each company attend this event.
- 85% hold their picnics off-site, while 15% use company property.
- Of those holding picnics off-site, 32% use city parks, 30% use theme parks and 4% use forest preserves, while 34% use other premises.
- Those going off-site reserve space an average of 7 to 8 months in advance.
- The average approximate picnic budget was \$15,428.
- Of those companies which have picnics, 56% charge admission fees and 45% do not.
- Picnic planning starts an average of 5 to 6 months in advance.
- An average of 24 volunteers per company help run the picnics.
- Sports, clowns and childrens' games are the top three forms of entertainment provided by respondents. Others include adult games, bands, face painting, magicians, D.J./dancing, carnival booths, eating contests, fun runs/walks, hot air balloon rides, sky divers, puppeteers, hay rides, etc. (Contact NESRA headquarters for complete list.)
- Other than company general liability coverage, 13 percent of respondents take out additional liability protection for picnics.
- 56% of the respondents having picnics serve alcohol, while 45% do not.
- In response to the question regarding eligibility to attend, 46% invite employees, family and retirees; 32% invite employees, family, retirees and guests; and 22% invite just employees and retirees.
- 70% hold their picnics on Saturdays; the majority take place in the summer with August being the most popular month.
- Respondents use the following types of vendors: caterers, park suppliers, corporate event specialists, logo vendors, food merchandisers, equipment rental agencies, etc.

For additional information, contact NESRA headquarters.

## ATTITUDE SURVEYS

An attitude survey can yield invaluable information, particularly for use in organizational planning and employee improvement programs. To maximize benefits, managers must be willing to invest the time and money to conduct a survey properly, to share the results with employees, and to actively respond to the results by implementing new programs or improving existing ones. A well-designed attitude survey can serve 10 functions to assist managers in their planning process.

- **An objective evaluation of employees:** You will have an inventory of a valuable asset--your employees.
- **Organizational development:** By defining the organization's strengths and weaknesses as perceived by employees, the survey can be a blueprint for organizational development showing managers strengths to build upon and weaknesses to support.
- **A management audit:** It can indicate how well management is doing by identifying strong and weak areas.
- **Communication:** The survey gives employees a chance to offer input to management. Management then can respond with changes and improvements.
- **Employee development:** Managers may detect employee training needs and obstacles hindering performance and advancement.
- **Quality of work environment:** Morale can be raised by making the workplace a pleasant place to be. Giving employees a chance to make suggestions supports the theory of a higher-quality workplace.
- **Motivation:** Employees recognize and appreciate the time, expense and energy management is putting forth to seek their feedback. Because of this, employees may have higher morale after the survey.
- **An employee outlet:** Employees can vent frustrations, concerns and gripes. Upon releasing these feelings, employees feel better, and morale may be increased.
- **An assessment of change:** The exact impact of organizational changes can be discovered by administering the survey before and after new programs, procedures, mergers or re-organizations. Surveying employees before a change may also help management prepare for possible reactions.
- **The bottom-line:** By indicating needs in organizational and employee development, the survey can have a positive significant effect on profits, productivity, and cost containment.

Look in next month's issue of Keynotes for tips on how to design an attitude survey. Source: Personnel Journal.

**SEAT BELT PROGRAMS  
SAVE EMPLOYEES' LIVES,  
EMPLOYERS' MONEY**

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that motor vehicle crashes are the largest single cause of lost work time and on-the-job fatalities for U.S. businesses, according to Employee Health and Fitness. In fact, on-the-job highway vehicle fatalities exceed the next two leading causes of job-related deaths combined. Heart attacks account for 12% of work-related deaths, falls account for 11%, and highway vehicle accidents account for 27%.

Seat belt use should be an important part of any health promotion or safety effort. In order to develop and enforce a formal policy on seat belt use the following elements should be included:

- a statement of concern for the health and safety of all employees and their families,
- a clear statement requiring that all employees who travel in company cars or other vehicles wear seat belts,
- a list of specific situations in which employees are expected to wear seat belts,
- and a statement of potential penalties for failure to wear a seat belt. Penalties might include adverse performance appraisal comments and loss of sick leave or disability coverage in case of accident.

A seat belt policy should also include a statement that encourages using seat belts at all times, not just during work time. In addition to a formal seat belt policy, companies can use the following tactics to encourage employees to use seat belts:

- Maintain safety equipment in company vehicles.
- Promote seat belt use at employee orientation and periodic employee meetings. Make seat belt use the "norm" within your organization.
- Provide reminders. Contact your local highway traffic safety commission for promotional materials such as posters and fliers on seat belt and child safety restraint use.
- Communicate the message creatively. For example, post descriptive summaries of monthly state traffic fatalities, and comment on seat belt use of vehicle occupants. Through employee newsletters and bulletin boards, publicize stories about employees who escape serious injury in auto accidents because they used seat belts.
- Make sure seat belts are part of health risk assessments. Check for questions on seat belt use in health risk appraisal surveys or other health assessments.
- Sponsor reward programs. Conduct periodic incentive programs to reinforce seat belt use.
- Support mandatory seat belt laws. This demonstrates the contribution business can make to the health and well-being of a community.

## **1988 NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM**

NESRA wishes to thank all those who submitted entries for this year's National Awards Program. All winners will be notified this month so they can make plans to attend the Annual Conference and Exhibit to receive their awards. Awards will be presented during the Management Luncheon on May 13. NESRA received 141 entries from 50 companies, which is an increase from 134 entries from 44 companies received in 1987.

## **ANTISTA AND HAGGERTY APPOINTED TO NESRA BOARD**

Mary Lou Antista was named the associate member representative for NESRA's Board. She fills the vacancy left by Marianne Flowers, Sea World of San Diego, who resigned because of family and work changes. Antista is employed at the San Diego Zoo and Wild Animal Park, P.O. Box 551, San Diego, CA 92112, 619/231-1515.

Dick Haggerty was appointed to NESRA's Board as Region II Director. Haggerty is employed at Washington Gas Light Company, 6801 Industrial Road, Springfield, VA 22151, 703/750-4411.

## **1988 MEMBERSHIP & PEER NETWORK DIRECTORY**

All NESRA general, chapter organization, academic and national associate members will be receiving the 1988 Membership & Peer Network Directory this month. Look for your copy soon!

## **NESRA's SPEAKERS BUREAU**

NESRA is in the beginning stages of forming a speakers bureau. The purpose of this bureau is to provide a list of knowledgeable individuals who can speak about topics in the field of employee services and recreation at other personnel-related association (i.e. American Society for Personnel Administration, American Society of Training and Development) conferences and/or their local chapter meetings. This is an excellent way for NESRA to help other organizations begin or expand their roles in employee services and recreation programs.

If you would be interested in being included on NESRA's speakers bureau list, please contact Randy Schools, NESRA's vice president of public & government affairs, National Institutes of Health, 9000 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda, MD 20891, 301/496-6061.

## **"DISCOVER THE MAGIC OF ES&R" WITH NESRA**

Finishing touches are being put on what promises to be one of the best NESRA conferences ever - the 47th Annual Conference & Exhibit, May 11-15 at the Buena Vista Palace in Orlando, Florida. Highlights of this year's conference include the Principles Track -- a series of four sessions aimed at providing the novice a thorough overview of the field; the "NESRA Company Store" -- an area set up in the exhibit hall providing invaluable information to assist you in your operation if you have a company store or are planning one; and the Exhibit Hall where we expect a record number of exhibits.

If you haven't registered, do so now and "Discover the Magic of ES&R." You most certainly will come away with new ideas to bring back to your organization. Don't miss this opportunity to help yourself, your company and your employees!

# KEYnotes

## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND RECREATION MANAGERS

June, 1988 Vol 18 No.6

### DEPENDENT CARE SURVEY RESULTS

NESRA recently surveyed its members to discover who currently offers child care and/or eldercare programs. A total of 205 responses were received from the mini-survey (mailed with May Keynotes). Here are the results:

- 30 percent (62) of the respondents' companies have child care assistance; 11 percent (22) of these companies have eldercare assistance.
- 13 percent of respondents said liability is an issue preventing their organization from offering assistance.

Those companies providing such programs offer the following types of assistance:

|                                            | <u>Child Care</u> | <u>Eldercare</u> |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Information, Resource and Referral Service | 81%               | 45%              |
| Voucher or Vendor Program                  | 4%                | 0                |
| Flexible Work Schedule                     | 23%               | 30%              |
| Consortia                                  | 4%                | 0                |
| Dependent Care Assistance Program          | 42%               | 64%              |
| On-Site Center                             | 25%               | 0                |

- 82 percent of those companies offering child care allow all employees to be eligible to participate and 27 percent of those companies offering eldercare do so.
- Of those companies polled with an on-site day care center, 93 percent have had no specific problems managing the center. The remaining 7 percent reported that it was a challenge to meet the needs of employees who work fixed part-time schedules and flexible part-time schedules.
- 16 percent of the companies offer dependent care assistance as part of a flexible benefits plan and 8 percent offer it as a salary reduction agreement.

Respondent companies planning to expand their child care and/or eldercare assistance programs within the next two years plan to do so by offering discounts with providers; alternative work schedules; exchangeable shifts; a sick child program at local hospital; on-site information and referral services; additional indoor space; on-site day care facility; consortia membership; new center for the elderly; expansion of program to include union employees; an introduction to eldercare; cafeteria/voucher program, Section 125-pre-tax deduction, flexible benefits; salary reduction agreement; and after-school programs.

## THE PARADOXICAL MANAGER

In today's world of contradictions, paradoxical managers are necessary. These managers must possess the qualities associated with a traditional charismatic, effective leader while still maintaining sensitivity to employees. For example, a paradoxical manager is firm but flexible, enthusiastic but calm, very friendly but always keeping distance, candid but very quiet--a deep thinker, a dreamer but has his or her feet on the ground and a visionary. It may appear that it takes an inherited magical power to be an excellent leader, but it actually requires hard work and determination.

To become an effective paradoxical manager:

- **Use conflict to create harmony.** Expect to deal with conflict and do so openly. Since it is unnatural for all people to always agree, a healthy level of conflict can foster harmony.
- **Wander around to learn more.** Learn how to manage employees by walking among the first-line workers. They are the most knowledgeable people in the company.
- **Manage employees by listening to them.** Make listening to employees a priority. Know when you should talk and when you should listen. Before making some decisions, wait for first-line employees' input.
- **See the invisible.** Look for unused potential among your employees. Then, tap that resource.
- **Turn trouble-makers into trouble-shooters.** Be aware that employee trouble-makers can also fix problems. If they can get employees' attention to voice negative comments, they can also rally employees positively.
- **Create the favorable from the unfavorable.** Instead of referring to employees who don't fit the company mold as "different," call them "special."
- **Be strong by exposing your weaknesses.** Be strong by revealing your vulnerability. Put your title aside occasionally and speak to employees on a human level. It is important for managers to open up.
- **Offer stability when facilitating change.** To foster employee acceptance of change, also offer security of the familiar.
- **Make work seem like play.** Use humor to relax employees, create spontaneity and release creativity. A paradoxical manager understands that employees can be tired after a day's work and still feel good.

(Source: Management World, May/June, 1988.)

## SUPERSTARS PROGRAM AT DIGITAL EQUIPMENT CORP.

To help maintain high employee morale and to show appreciation for a job well done, the Digital facility in Salem, NH, runs a Superstars program--an intramural competition between the different departments at its facility.

The Superstars tradition began in 1978, when the Salem facility first opened. Since then, all 1,800 employees working at the Salem plant have had an opportunity to participate in and enjoy the indoor/outdoor games and meals.

To execute this program, a company needs access to volleyball courts, softball diamonds, tennis courts, horse shoe pits, jogging trails (all of which Digital had on-site), bowling alleys and golf courses. In addition to utilizing these facilities, Digital decided to furnish employees with different colored T-shirts (to represent teams) and trophies. It is recommended that to provide these offerings for a group this size, a company should budget approximately \$10,000 (excluding meals).

To plan the event, approximately two months prior to Superstars the Employee Activity Committee (made up of representatives from each department) establishes which events will be offered (based on turn-out and feedback from the previous year).

Then, each department posts sign-up sheets for each event, which are evaluated at a second Employee Activities Committee meeting. At that time some events are eliminated as necessary.

Within each group, a captain who is responsible for formulating, coaching and managing that team and for attending that event's breakout meetings (i.e., the softball captain for group A will attend the softball meetings with other groups' softball captains) is chosen.

After events are confirmed and teams are formed, Employee Activities Committee members are assigned an event to oversee. They are responsible for obtaining judges and/or officials for their event if needed, scoring the events and reporting the finish position of each team in their event.

Each event is worth the same amount of points. Team winners in each event are awarded trophies and points. At the end of the competition, the group with the highest cumulative points is the overall winner.

One of the greatest challenges of Superstars is running 18 event competitions in a day and a half with up to nine events running simultaneously. Not only are there multiple events but they are spread out over 135 acres on-site as well as at an off-site golf course and two bowling alleys.

For more information on Digital's Superstars event, call John Santos, human resources specialist, at 603/894-2455.

**NESRA ANNOUNCES 1988  
PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS**

Individuals (193) from 43 member companies participated in this year's Photo Contest. A total of 413 entries were received. The winning photos were on display at NESRA's 47th Annual Conference & Exhibit in Lake Buena Vista, FL. Special thanks go to **Contest Chairman George Stark** from McDonnell-Douglas Corp., his team of professional photographers who judged the entries and to **AT&T Information Systems, Colorcraft Corp., Court Products, Inc., C.S. Photo, Employee Photo Services USA, Guardian Photo, Inc., and Oneida Silversmiths** who co-sponsored the contest and donated fine prizes. Following are the Best In Show, Division and Class Winners:

**BEST IN SHOW**

SOLO SCULLER  
Rod Paulson  
Texas Instruments

**DIVISION WINNERS**

**SLIDES**

FLIRTATIOUS BEAR  
Catherine Rielly  
University Hospital

**COLOR PRINTS**

AFRICAN DAWN  
Diana Tempel  
Itek

**B&W PRINTS**

MOSHER VALLEY #1  
John Blanton  
Texas Instruments

**CLASS WINNERS**

**SLIDES**

Nature      FLIRTATIOUS BEARS  
                Catherine Rielly  
                University Hospital

Nature

**COLOR PRINTS**

BUTTERFLY ON THISTLE  
Beverly Ratliff  
Nationwide Insurance

Scenic

ALPINE VIEW  
A. Emanuele  
Goodyear

Scenic

AFRICAN DAWN  
Diana Temple  
Itek

Human  
Interest

LONDON MARATHON  
Bill Garforth  
Combustion Engineering

Human  
Interest

THE MUD PAINTER  
Otis Crawford  
Martin Marietta

Open

SOUTHERN JEWELS  
Carolyn Banks  
Texas Instruments

Open

TIMES PAST  
M. R. Duke  
Goodyear

**B&W PRINTS**

Nature

UNTITLED  
J. Kirby Heard  
Sterling Advertising

Human  
Interest

MOSHER VALLEY #1  
John Blanton  
Texas Instruments

Scenic

DESERT STORM  
Ray Tenold  
Rockwell International

Open

LIGHT  
Frans Carlson  
General Mills

# KEYnotes

## THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEE SERVICES AND RECREATION MANAGERS

September, 1988 Vol. 18 No. 9

### CHRISTMAS PARTY SURVEY RESULTS

To aid those planning company Christmas parties, NESRA recently conducted a mini-survey of its members to discover who hosts Christmas parties and how these events are presented. A total of 457 responses were received, drawing the rate of return to nearly 20%. Here are the results:

- Over three-fourths (76%) of respondents have an annual employee Christmas party and 40% have an annual children's Christmas party.
- Almost 45% of respondents who have an employee Christmas party hold it after hours, 43% hold it on a weekend day and 22% hold it during regular office hours. Almost 80% of companies which sponsor a children's Christmas party schedule it for a weekend day, 14% for after hours and 6% for regular office hours.
- When companies hold parties after hours or on the weekend, 20% of employee Christmas parties take place at on-site locations while 57% of children's Christmas parties do so. Eighty-six percent of employee parties take place off-site and 49% of children's parties do so.
- Of those companies holding off-site parties, 59% of employee parties and 8% of children's parties take place at hotels and 43% of employee parties and 21% of children's parties take place at banquet facilities. Alternative locations are also utilized.
- Plans begin for an employee Christmas party at an average of 8 months in advance and 6 months in advance for a children's Christmas party.
- The approximate Christmas party budget is nearly \$15,000.
- Over half (62%) of companies sponsoring an employee Christmas party give out gifts and 77% of companies sponsoring a children's party do so.
- Respondents spend approximately \$2,000 on employee gifts and approximately \$4,000 on children's gifts.

For the complete survey providing more information on alternative locations, gifts, gift distribution systems, entertainment, evaluation procedures and unique Christmas party activities, contact NESRA Headquarters.

## PRAISE-CRITICISM RATIO

The ratio at which managers use praise and criticism can encourage a staff's performance and improve manager-staff interpersonal relationships.

A corporate study tabulating praise and criticism revealed that the most effective ratio of praise to criticism is four to one. For every one time a manager reprimands a staff member, there should be four instances in succession in which a manager offers praise. Results of this survey show when this ratio is practiced, employees feel as though they have a good relationship with their bosses.

Managers can foster strong interpersonal relationships with employees by following these one-minute steps to offering praise:

- Give direct, specific and immediate praise. As soon as you notice praiseworthy behavior, use statements like these: "Bob, I want to tell you that you've done an excellent job organizing our company picnic. I especially like the children's games you planned."
- Explain how good you feel about what an employee did right and relate the person's good behavior to the whole picture such as how it helps fellow employees.
- Pause a minute after you have praised a person. This silence will allow the employee to absorb the message and the sincerity behind it.
- Urge employees to repeat their good performances.
- Complete the praising session with a tangible sign of approval like a handshake or a pat on the back to show that you support this employee's success.

When it is necessary to reprimand an employee, remember that no one enjoys being criticized. Follow these tips to lessen the unpleasantness of the situation:

- Specifically address the problem at hand. Avoid attacking an employee personally.
- Deal with an incorrect behavior immediately. Waiting for a good time to discuss the problem will lessen the impact of the reprimand. Storing criticisms and delivering them in a lump sum will overwhelm the employee making it difficult for him/her to correct any single behavior.
- Assure the employee that you approve of him/her as a person but that you are dissatisfied with the behavior s/he is exhibiting and that such actions need to be modified.
- Approach an employee with a reprimand in private rather than in public to avoid damaging and embarrassing the employee.

## RIDESHARING PROGRAM AT COORS

In Golden, Colorado, ridesharing is an alternative to driving to work everyday for Adolph Coors Company employees who want to save on commuting expenses, wear and tear on their cars and stress on themselves.

Adolph Coors Company designed its Rideshare program with its employees in mind. "One of the main reasons people do not get involved in ridesharing is because they think it will tie them down," says Ms. Chris Courtney, Rideshare coordinator, Employee Services/Communications. "This just is not the case. The programs we offer have a great deal of freedom built into them." The key word in choosing the right ridesharing plan for you is flexibility.

Many employees participate in ridesharing only in the winter when driving is more difficult. But most of ride-sharing's benefits are just as attractive year-round. They include:

- **Savings:** Besides saving on gas, oil, tires and other maintenance items, ridesharers may also save on insurance costs if they lower their total driving distances into a lower bracket.
- **Stress Reduction:** Driving on congested roads is frustrating. Ridesharers can delay the stress associated with the workplace by avoiding the traffic battle to and from work.
- **Environmental Preservation:** Fewer vehicles on the road help to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion.

The three most popular types of ridesharing are carpooling, vanpooling and using public transportation.

**Carpooling** is popular because it offers flexibility. It can be as informal as spouses with nearby workplaces using one car instead of two - to a well-organized group of four or more commuters alternating driving.

**Vanpooling** is more organized and offers a different kind of benefit. For a monthly charge, riders enjoy the luxury of riding in a comfortable vehicle and forgetting driving completely.

**Public Transportation** is one of the easiest ways to get to work without a car. It requires no advance planning - you just leave your car in the driveway and hop on a bus.

"We just want people to give ridesharing a try. There are so many benefits, the idea at least deserves a chance," Courtney says. This concept is something to think about the next time you are driving home alone, zipping along at 10 miles per hour. For more information on the Coors Ridesharing Program, call Ms. Chris Courtney at 303/277-3835.

(Source: "Ridesharing - It Can Work For You," Coors Courier, August 1, 1988.)

**NESRA WILL CHARTER  
SAN GABRIEL CHAPTER**

On September 24, 1988, during the Region VII Conference and Exhibit in Universal City, California, NESRA will charter the newly-formed San Gabriel Employee Activities Association. The charter will be presented to SGEAA President Bill Ranney, vice president and employee services manager for Home Savings of America in Irwindale, California.

This chapter will increase the number of NESRA chapters to 38 located in 20 states including eight chapters in California.

**CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT:  
THE KEY TO NESRA'S  
GROWTH**

NESRA is now working on developing chapters in the following areas: Baltimore, MD; Bloomington-Normal, IL; Des Moines, IA; Charlotte, NC; Dothan, AL; Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Lancaster, PA; Newark, NJ; Salt Lake City, UT; and Stamford, CT. If you work in one of these areas and are willing to provide assistance in developing a chapter or know of any other potential chapter areas, please call Ken Cammarata, NESRA director of member services, (312) 562-8130, for more information.

**PLACEMENT REFERRAL  
SERVICE MATCHES  
EMPLOYEE WITH EMPLOYER**

NESRA's Placement Referral Service acts as a liaison between member organizations seeking qualified employee services, recreation and/or fitness/health personnel and individuals wishing to seek employment within these fields.

Employers: If you have an employee services, recreation and/or fitness/health opening, contact NESRA. Supply the details of the opening and NESRA Headquarters will send you resumes of various candidates you will want to consider. We will do your pre-screening for you, thereby saving you time and effort. There is no cost for utilizing this service.

Prospective Placement Referral Service members: Contact NESRA Headquarters to receive information on how the Placement Referral Service will assist you in your job search. There is a \$15.00 annual fee for this service which includes a one-year subscription to **EMPLOYEE SERVICES MANAGEMENT** magazine.

**MEMBERSHIP CONTEST  
UPDATE**

Over 40 NESRA associate members have donated prizes for the GO FOR THE GOLD Membership Contest which runs November 1, 1988 through January 25, 1989. Prizes range from week-long vacation packages, to weekend getaways and merchandise giveaways. Plus, each individual sponsoring a new member during the contest will receive a gift from NESRA. Look for more information on the contest in the October issue of **EMPLOYEE SERVICES MANAGEMENT** magazine and plan to participate!

**MAKE PROFESSIONAL  
CERTIFICATION YOUR  
GOAL**

The Certified Employee Services and Recreation Administrator (CESRA) program is committed to raising the professional standards of those full-time administrators engaged in employee services and recreation programs.

Anyone wishing to request a CESRA application can do so by calling NESRA at (312) 562-8130 or by writing to NESRA, 2400 S. Downing Avenue, Westchester, IL 60153